

Fran Pavley NEWS

Assemblymember, 41st District



A MONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER TO THE 41st ASSEMBLY DISTRICT
(Including Agoura Hills, Calabasas, Encino, Malibu, Hidden Hills, Lake Sherwood, Oak Park, Pacific Palisades, Port Hueneme, South Oxnard, Santa Monica, Tarzana, Topanga, Westlake Village, and Woodland Hills.)

JULY 2003 ISSUE



Photo by Tom Gamache

Hopes Rise to Save Ahmanson Ranch

For over ten years, many of us have been engaged in the effort to stop development of Ahmanson Ranch. It is the only parcel of land of its size of which I am aware anywhere in this region which remains pristine. It is home to endangered, threatened, listed, and rare species, as well as to hundreds of heritage oaks, and countless other plants and animals that live and thrive there in spite of our expanding urban environment. It is threatened by massive development which, since Ahmanson sits at the headwaters of the Malibu Creek Watershed, would also have incalculable impacts downstream.

I was very pleased to read recent press accounts in which it was reported that California's Secretary of Resources, Mary Nichols, is now in conversation with Washington Mutual about the possibility of putting Ahmanson Ranch into public ownership. The voter-approved Prop. 50 water resource bond could be used to help purchase Ahmanson Ranch. However, there are other critical acquisitions that will be competing for those limited dollars. (Voter approved bonds are restricted to the use intended and cannot be shifted to help solve the state budget crisis.)

(Continued on next page)

If and when actual negotiations do begin, I am ready to do whatever I can to work with Washington Mutual. The goal would bring enormous credit to them, while doing something very important for the public for generations to come. I sent a private personal letter to Kerry Killinger, Chairman, President and CEO of Washington Mutual in April of this year, encouraging him to consider the importance of this property to the public as permanent open space. I hope that it played some part in Washington Mutual's apparent willingness at this time to at least begin a dialogue with the state. It would be an extraordinary acquisition.

You can help right now!

If you agree that Ahmanson Ranch must be preserved permanently, please stop and take a few minutes **today** to write, fax or e-mail Governor Gray Davis. Let him know why you support acquisition of this unique property by the State and why it should be spared from development. You can make the difference.

Governor Gray Davis
State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: (916) 445-4633. E-mail: governor@governor.ca.gov

Please also send copies of your messages to the following:
Mary Nichols, Secretary of Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814
and
Al Wright, Executive Director, Wildlife Conservation Board
1807 13th Street, Suite 103
Sacramento, CA 95814

Why No State Budget?

As of July 1, the statutory deadline, California had no budget. Bills begin not to be paid, including state workers. California's credit will be in even more serious jeopardy than it is already. Vital services that people count on started to be cut off.

I came from local government. I was a four-term Mayor and Councilmember in Agoura Hills on a nonpartisan city council. Republicans and Democrats worked together in the common interest of securing the city's finances for the next year. The question that guided us was "what is in the best interest of the city?" We had little sense of which party label anyone wore.

I arrived in Sacramento in January of 2001 with the same hopes and expectations. Republicans and Democrats would work together, using their different points of view as checks and balances to craft good policy on a wide variety of issues for our very diverse and dynamic state. What followed was a series of disasters. I was barely sworn in when a huge tanker truck crashed through the Capitol building and burst into flames. It was probably a warning of what was to come. For the rest of the year, it was the energy crisis. We weathered that storm and kept the lights on.

In 2001 and into 2002, the national economy was headed south. California was particularly hard hit because Silicon Valley and its dot-com boom collapsed. A hefty 48% of the state's general fund revenue comes from personal income taxes. Anyone who invested in the stock market saw their income plummet, and California, being so dependent on the income tax, began running an increasing deficit.

In good economic times, we had been able to make vital investments in our schools. Ten years ago, California's schools were 49th in the country. Since then we have increased our expenditures for class size reduction and teacher training, as well as enacted testing and accountability measures. And we have crawled our way up from 49th to 29th. We are finally moving in the right direction. This is no time to lose that momentum. A well-educated workforce is vital to our state's economic future.

When California faced similar financial problems in the 1990s, Republican Governor Pete Wilson and the legislature solved the problem with a dollar-for-dollar compromise package of half spending cuts/borrowing and half new revenues.

It takes a 2/3 vote of the legislature to pass a budget. In fact, California is one of only three states that require a 2/3 vote. Even the federal government requires just a simple majority vote. What this means is that even if all 48 Democrats voted to pass the current Assembly version 2003-04 budget (and 47 of us did vote on July 27 for a balanced proposal of cuts, borrowing and new revenues, with one member out ill), six Assembly Republicans must cross party lines and vote with the Democrats.

Politics have taken over....

Senate Republican leader Jim Brulte has now threatened that he will end the political career of any Republican who supports any tax increase to help close the deficit. Nothing good has come out of this "line in the sand" except partisan gridlock, which has been made even worse by the attempts to recall the Governor right in the middle of the budget crisis.

One of the biggest issues blocking a budget compromise is a proposed ½ cent sales tax to pay off a proposed \$10.7 billion deficit bond. Both Republicans and Democrats support this one-time only bond, which is critical to closing this year's gap. The issue is how we will repay it. Wall Street analysts insist that we establish a dedicated revenue source to pay the debt service on the bond. By contrast, if we were to use our existing sales tax to pay off this bond, we would have to cut an additional \$2.3 billion every year for the next five years.

The state budget has become a political problem. It is no longer only a fiscal problem. I am dismayed at the level of partisan bickering and grandstanding while California sinks further into crisis. I am confident that a solution can be reached if we can break through the party labels and superheated rhetoric and work together to move this great state forward.

As of the release date of this newsletter, there are several plans actively under review by legislators. On Sunday evening, July 6, the Assembly convened in special session to review a Republican alternative budget. It proposed a sweeping new set of program cuts in order to avoid any new taxes. Their plan included cutting elementary school education by another \$1 billion by delaying the enrollment of over 100,000 children in kindergarten; cutting \$450 million from the state prison system; and cutting the UC and State College system by an amount equal to an entire campus for each. Other cuts would seriously reduce money for the California Youth Authority, State Parks, and health and service programs for the blind, elderly and disabled. This proposal failed passage, including the abstention of five Republican members.

Finally, to those who say just "cut the waste," consider this. If the entire state government were shut down, meaning close every state college and university, empty the prisons, fire every CHP officer, stop all state highway maintenance and freeway repair, etc., the amount "saved" would still be only \$16.5 billion. This would not close even half of the present gap.

The debate continues. All solutions to the current budget gap will require very difficult choices. Cuts to education, health care, and local government programs all remain on the table.

A Few Bills that I Introduced This Year

AB 740 – Clean Air, Water & Coastal Protection Bond. This urgency bill, sponsored by the Nature Conservancy, will place a bond on the March 2004 ballot to provide bond funding for air quality and water quality programs.

In the Assembly.

AB 28 – Firefighting Haz/Mat Response Team. This bill establishes a new Firefighting Hazardous Materials Response Team Equipment Program for the purchase of hazardous materials response apparatus and equipment to state and local agencies. The program would be implemented only upon receipt and appropriation of Federal funds for this purpose.

Passed in the Assembly. In the Senate.

AB 878 – Harbor Districts. This bill, sponsored by the Oxnard Harbor District increases Port Hueneme's borrowing power from private sources from \$1 million to \$10 million, and allows that money to be repaid over ten instead of five years. The bill also gives the Port greater leeway to invest funds in state and/or federal investment programs.

Passed in the Assembly. In the Senate.

AB 1009 – PCH double fine and speed limit bill. This bill, sponsored by the City of Malibu, establishes a double fine zone in the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Malibu. It also allows Caltrans to consider factors unique to PCH (pedestrian and bicyclist safety; visual and non-motorized distractions; the presence of residences, parking lots, and on-street parking; and the frequency of left turns and U-turns) when Caltrans conducts its periodic evaluation of the speed limit on PCH.

Passed in the Assembly. Amended in the Senate.

Now a two-year bill.



Photo Courtesy of the City of Malibu

AB 1212 – Coastal Sand Replenishment. This bill requires project applicants that are undertaking beach replenishment work to supervise the implementation of their beach replenishment plans, and to provide a plan to the lead agency/Coastal Commission on how the supervision will be accomplished. This bill was prompted by three reported incidents in which debris-filled sand was deposited on beaches, causing a public health hazard - one in LA County and two in San Diego County.

Passed in the Assembly. In the Senate.

AB 1548 – Environmental Education. This bill, sponsored by Heal the Bay, would require the state to establish specified environmental education standards.

In the Senate.

AB 1552 – Insurance Contracts. This bill, proposed by Ron Dean who is a constituent of mine, would have prohibited the use of discretionary clauses in insurance contracts that give insurance companies an unfair advantage in the arbitration. Unfortunately, the insurance industry strongly opposed this bill.

Defeated in the Assembly Insurance Committee.

AB 1610 – Identity Theft. This bill, sponsored by CalPIRG, would require credit lenders to take reasonable steps to verify that information on credit applications, such as name and social security number, matches with what is in the consumers' credit report. Current law only requires that the address be verified.

Signed by the Governor.

AB 1683 – Childcare Facilities. This bill requires childcare facilities to post site visitation reports done by Community Care Licensing. The bill would require childcare facilities to post these reports in a visible place for 30 days if the facility was cited for violations. The proposal would also require the Community Care Licensing inspector to post a notice indicating that the Department inspected the facility, the date of the inspection, and whether the facility was cited for violations and what type of violations occurred. Parents have a right to know such information.

Passed in the Assembly. In the Senate.

AB 1697 – Children in Vehicles. This bill requires children to be secured in a rear seat of a vehicle, when available, until they are at least age 6 or weigh at least 60 lbs. Exceptions would include vehicles that do not have back seats, if all back seats are occupied by children under the age of 6, and if it is medically necessary for a child to ride in the front seat.

Passed in the Assembly. In the Senate.

AJR 29. This Assembly Joint Resolution expresses the desire of the Legislature that the U.S. Congress and the President of the United States enact and sign legislation to remove the onerous effects of the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision of the Social Security Act. These two provisions reduce the Social Security benefits of individuals who have paid into both the Social Security System and another public pension system. The provisions particularly affect the retirement benefits of public school teachers, and will help attract change-of-career adults into the teaching profession.

Passed in the Assembly and Senate. Chaptered.

(More)

Make Them Stop Calling!

The national "Do Not Call" registry is now open for business. California's "do not call" process feeds into the Federal program, and is receiving record support. Requests to be placed on the "do not call list" on the first day it opened were running at the rate of 25 contacts per second!

To get on this list, you can register in two ways.

- Telephone toll-free to 1-888-382-1222.
- Register on line at DONOTCALL.GOV.

Registration is free. Beware of any sites that attempt to charge you for this free service. Telemarketers who are subject to this law (charities and a few others are exempt) can be fined up to \$11,000 per violation.

Senate Privacy Bill Fails Passage Again

State Senator Jackie Speier has been working to pass a bill that would have created the strongest financial privacy protection law in the country. It would have allowed people to opt out of having their financial records shared or sold between companies without their written permission, with heavy fines for violations.

For the fourth year, it was defeated in committee by industry groups who have spent millions opposing it. Privacy is an issue of increasing concern to my constituents, and if the bill is killed again this year, consumer advocates have vowed to put an even tougher measure on the March 2004 ballot as a statewide initiative.

Santa Monica/Malibu School Measure Passes

Congratulations to everyone who worked so hard in the Santa Monica/Malibu Unified School District to pass Measure S. I was very pleased to endorse this important measure. Because it needed 2/3-voter support to pass, it was a challenge, but all the effort paid off.

The District reports that they will now be able to retain most of their teachers who had received layoff notices, as well as the class size reduction program. Hopefully, other classes, programs and department cuts or reductions can be restored, and many of the nurses and library support staff and music program will be retained. In these times of budget cuts from Sacramento, I commend Santa Monica and Malibu voters for taking action at the local level to protect the quality of education for their children. Educating our children is the key to California's economic future.

Three States Sue to Regulate CO2 Emissions

As most of you will already know, my bill last year, AB 1493, was landmark global warming legislation establishing new CO2 emissions levels for cars and light trucks in California. Although the bill received both national and international attention, the Federal government has been slow to follow. Three states – Connecticut, Massachusetts and Maine – have filed suit against the Environmental Protection Agency to force the Federal government to regulate the amount of carbon dioxide permitted in the air. The lawsuit says that research confirms that industrial emissions of CO2 do contribute to global warming, and therefore are subject to regulation under the Clean Air Act.

FTB Homeowner and Renter Assistance

If on December 31, 2002 you were age 62 or older, blind, or disabled, and meet certain financial criteria, you could qualify for Homeowner or Renter Assistance.

- **Homeowner Assistance** is a once-a-year payment from the State of California based on part of the property taxes assessed and paid on your home. Maximum payment is \$472.60.
- **Renter Assistance** is a once-a-year payment to qualified renters based on part of the property taxes that you pay indirectly when you pay your rent. Maximum payment is \$347.50.

Free assistance to apply is available between July 1 and October 15. Call 1 (800) 338-0505 or visit the FTB's website at www.ftb.ca.gov to get the address of a Homeowner or Renter Assistance Volunteer site near you. Claim booklets, including forms, are also available on request from my District Office.



31st Anniversary of Title IX

June 23, 2003 marked the 31st Anniversary of Title IX, the law that forced schools to develop equity in the use of funds for both male and female athletic programs. Title IX has played an important role in the growth of professional athletic leagues for women, and many Olympic medal winners and college champions are beneficiaries of Title IX.

there equal access to public sports facilities. school-age girls to participate in.

Prior to the enactment of Title IX in 1972, there were virtually no high school or college athletic programs, leagues or scholarship opportunities for girls, nor was There were few club or youth sports teams for younger

Title IX now requires the percentages of total athletic scholarship dollars awarded to male and female athletes to be within one percent or one scholarship. Although there are recommendations coming out of the Federal government that could reverse the progress that has been made, there are also two bills currently in the California Assembly that would protect Title IX in our state, should the Federal recommendations be put into effect.

Moorpark High School Takes National Academic Decathlon Championship

Although Moorpark High is located outside the 41st Assembly District, I want to add my most enthusiastic congratulations to every one of the extraordinary students on the winning team. I also want to thank their coach, teachers, parents, and Superintendent Frank DePasquale, who supported these young people over the past year.

This win has particular meaning for me since I was fortunate enough to have taught six of the winning students when they were in my class at Chaparral Middle School.

On Tuesday, July 8, all nine members of the team plus Coach Larry Jones, Superintendent Frank DePasquale and school board member Mindy Yaras visited the state capitol. I was delighted to join them and Governor Gray Davis in the Governor's Office and as they visited with Assembly Speaker Herb Wesson. On Wednesday, I presented certificates of recognition from the State Assembly to each of them for all the hard work that led up to the honor that they so richly earned and the distinction they have brought to their school. Having students that I taught reach this level of accomplishment is one of the many rewards of teaching as a career. This was Moorpark's second national title in five years.



District High Schools Recognized

I was delighted to read that Oak Park High School was named as one of the best public high schools in the U.S. by Newsweek magazine. Rankings were based on the number of advanced placement classes offered, which are designed to get as many young people as possible ready for college. Oak Park ranked #95 in the country.

Other district schools that placed in the Newsweek rankings were Malibu High School at # 117, Santa Monica High School at #165, Palisades Charter High School at #194, Calabasas High School at #260, Taft High School at #359, and Agoura High School at #683.

Congratulations to all of these schools, and to all the teachers who deserve shared credit for these wonderful national rankings.

2003 California Strawberry Scholarships Awarded

For the past eight years, the California Strawberry Commission has awarded scholarships to the children of strawberry farm workers. In most cases, these young people are the first to go to college in the family. The pride of both students and their parents is almost beyond measure. This is a wonderful program. I very much enjoyed attending the June 5 luncheon where five teens from Hueneme High School received scholarship money from the Commission.

- **Deicy Baez** will attend UC Riverside to pursue a Master's Degree and to become an elementary school teacher.
- **Yasmin Carranze** will attend Oxnard College and then transfer to a university where she, too, plans to pursue a teaching career.
- **Luis Herrera** will attend Oxnard College will be receiving two degrees – a high school diploma and a second for Auto Repair and Maintenance. He has received multiple awards and is recipient of a United States National Science Award.
- **Alfred Vieyra** is headed to UC Santa Barbara to pursue a degree in Electrical Engineering. He maintained a 4.10 grade point average, and was one of only 50 students statewide selected to attend the UCLA Migrant Student Conference.
- **Miguelina Zapien** will begin her studies at UC Santa Barbara, and plans to attend medical school. She is an honor student, volunteer at St. John's Hospital, and helps provide tutoring and assistance to other students as they pursue higher education.

These are simply remarkable young people, and should serve as an inspiration to others of what can be achieved when one pushes beyond the limitations of circumstance toward the goal of realizing their true potential. To the two who have chosen teaching as their careers, and to the others who will teach by their examples, my warmest congratulations.

Holocaust Reparations Wire Transfer Fees Waived

Last year I had the opportunity to encourage a number of banks that receive Holocaust reparations wire transfers to voluntarily waive the fees that reduced the net amount received by the survivors themselves. Most are now very elderly, and many are very poor. Bet Tzedek, a nonprofit organization which provides quality free legal assistance to indigent, elderly and disabled residents of L.A. County, is funded in part by the Jewish Federation of Greater L.A., and was a wonderful partner in that successful effort.

To date, Bank of America, Citibank, Wells Fargo, Washington Mutual, First Federal Bank of California, World Savings, JP MorganChase, Dime Savings, and City National Bank have all instructed their North America branches to waive such fees. 26 financial institutions in Illinois have now agreed to waive their wire transfer fees on Holocaust reparation payments.

\$15 million in humanitarian aid from German insurance companies will also be paid out beginning this year in ten annual payments. This follows years of negotiations with insurance companies whose policies were never honored following the death of the covered person at the hands of the Nazis.

Malibu Farmer's Market July 20

On Sunday, July 20, I will be hosting another of my Mobile District Office events at Cornucopia's Malibu Farmer's Market. The Market is open from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Civic Center parking lot. I hope to be there from roughly 10:30 to 12:30. Please stop by if you can. I very much enjoy these opportunities to meet with residents in person, to hear what's important to you, and to answer your questions.

Assemblymember Pavley's Committee Assignments

Appropriations Committee
Arts, Entertainment, Sports, Tourism, and Internet Media Committee
Budget Committee
Education Committee
Transportation Committee
Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee
Select Committee on Title IX
Select Committee on California Ports
Chair, Select Committee on Air and Water Quality
Chair, Budget Subcommittee #3 on Resources
Legislative Advisory Committee – Wildlife Conservation Board
Legislative Advisory Committee – California Coastal Conservancy
Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy Advisory Board

HOW TO REACH ME:

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If you know of anyone who you think would like to receive these newsletters, please e-mail their name, mailing address and e-mail address, and I'll be happy to add them to my list.

